REPRINT OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

It is our conviction that the writings of such men as Barton W. Stone and others who contributed from the fields of labor into the pages of *The Christian Messenger,* constitute some of the richest and most significant material this side of the New Testament.

The Christian Messenger reprint represents the combined efforts of hundreds of people. First, locating a complete set to photograph was a long search—a job we *never* attained! So far as our several months' research revealed, there is no extant complete set of these books in any one collection. Our work of photo reproduction was accomplished through "a little here, a little there," working from the basic set graciously made available by Roscoe Pierson, Librarian, Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, Kentucky. Among others helping in tracing down and supplying original copies were Enos Dowling (Lincoln Bible College), Lester Galbraith (Christian Theological Seminary), R. L. Roberts (Abilene Christian University), and Don DeWelt (Ozark Bible College), Wm. B. Miller (Presbyterian Historical Society), and David McWhirter, (Disciples of Christ Historical Society).

Especially grateful are we to R. L. Roberts, first for his urging that we coordinate the reprinting of the set, and second for producing a general index to the entire series. This required long hours of reviewing articles on his microfilm copy and assigning appropriate titles. The original indices at the end of each volume, as the reader will observe, were vague and inadequate. The general index is at the end of volume 14.

Sincere appreciation is expressed also to the hundreds who have entrusted us at Star Bible with their orders, a vote of confidence that gave us renewed courage and strength. We pray that these men of the early Restoration Movement will be duly honored, that many wise men will be led to their Savior, and that Jehovah's Name may be glorified through His Church now and evermore.

Alvin Jennings
Star Bible Publications
Fort Worth, Texas 76118

Dec., 1978

THE

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY

B. W. STONE and D. P. HENDERSON,

ELDERS IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.—*Paul.*
The Bible—the Bible is our only religion.—*Chillingsworth.*

VOLUME XIV.

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THE

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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INTRODUCTION.

We have no apologies to offer for our efforts during the past year; we did as well as we could under the circumstances with which we were surrounded, to promote the glory of the Lord and benefit the church and the world. We pursued that course which we thought best adapted to gain those important ends, and now feel greatly encouraged that our labors were not in vain.

Numerous correspondents from every quarter have given us their unqualified approbation, and urge us onward with the Messenger. Under these favorable circumstances we commence volume fourteen, cheered by the promises of our friends and the prospects ahead. We expect to be entirely free from any other engagements during the current year, and, therefore, can devote more of our time to the editorial and business department of the work. This will enable us to do more than we possibly could during the last year.

We issued a number of prospectuses some weeks since, and many of them have been returned with new subscribers. But few of our former patrons have directed a discontinuance, and we now take for granted, that the brethren and friends will so greatly increase our patronage that in some good de-

gree we shall be remunerated for our labor. We therefore advance to the work in good spirits, and design to wield our pens against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and to spare neither friends nor foes who walk not according to the will of God. We design especially to notice and expose the carnality of carnal professors of religion.

We most ardently desire to see godliness, piety and brotherly love keep pace with knowledge. Of the latter there is an astonishing increase within the last thirty years, but of the former we perceive a great lack. We are grieved to see so much unchristian controversy on christian doctrine. The truth is obscured by all such attempts to defend it, and its divine importance is lessoned in the view of all who attend to such wranglings. Few of the multitude can clearly discriminate between true philosophy and plausible sophistry; and while the mind is left in doubt, what is truth, the all importance of practical christianity is greatly overlooked.

Practical christianity can only save protestantism from popery and scepticism, as also from eternal ruin. Excitements of an alarming character are becoming frequent, because of the rapid spread of popery. Many of the protestants of every name have formed, and are forming antipapal societies, in order to counteract and stop the influence of popery. We fear the reverse will be the consequence, unless managed in the spirit of truth. If all the parties among the protestants would agree to reform their lives, to be holy, humble and obedient to *all* God's commandments—if they would agree to cease from their unhallowed debates and striving one against the other, and to unite as one to promote godliness and brotherly love in the earth—if they would abandon their human schemes and platforms, exchange them for the Bible and the Bible alone—if they would agree

to become active and diligent in their Master's cause, and set an example before their flocks and the world, and exhort them affectionately to follow them as they follow their professed Lord—if they would agree to meet together at the throne of grace in fervant, solemn and faithful prayer, then the spread of popery would cease, and skeptecism be confounded and silent if not converted to the Lord. Nothing short of this will save us from the iron grasp of popery—nothing less will save the world. Such are our calm convictions.

But do we see piety and brotherly love? Do we see genuine christianity promoted by such controversies and debates? Look around and enquire for these fruits. Do you know of any person spiritually renewed or refreshed with spiritual understanding? Do you find brotherly love and christian union advanced? On the contrary, do you not find their opposites promoted?

We do not contend against the public defence of truth as opposed to error if it be conducted aright; but alas! few in our day have christianity enough for such debates. The pride of opinion and the love of victory predominate over the love of truth. We cannot bear to be counted errorists in any opinion or speculation we may have advanced or received, however plainly exposed. Our prejudices are too strong to yield to a contrary doctrine from that we have received by tradition from our fathers. This state of things we fear, will continue until the religion of heaven prevails.

Brethren of every name, allow us most affectionately to urge upon you the importance of laying aside all sectarian and sectional feelings and interests. We, doubtless, live in a period of time pregnant with fearful and awful consequences to the church and to the world. Shall we not abandon our unchristian warfare against each other? Shall we not abandon all things that divide God's children, and that blow

the fires of discord, and as the children of one common Father rally around the blood stained banner of the Cross, with our feet planted upon the one divine foundation laid in Zion?

B. W. STONE,
D. P. HENDERSON, } EDITORS.

THE FOURTH INTERVIEW BETWEEN AN OLD AND YOUNG PREACHER.

Y. P. I find that the lecture I delivered at B—l, and the conversation with the pastor after public worship, as mentioned in our former interview, are highly spoken of, and I hope, will prove a blessing to the people. I am come again to receive from you, father, instruction on other points of truth.

O. P. I will tell you an anecdote, which you will remember for good. A young preacher having preached a *flaming* discourse, and having descended from the pulpit, was immediately told by a prominent member of the church, that he had preached a great sermon. The young preacher replied, that the devil had just before whispered the same thing in his ear. Take heed, my son, lest such improper talk may puff you up. I once heard another preacher pretty lengthily descant on the proof that women had souls, and were therefore moral agents, and responsible beings to God as well as men, and to whom the gospel should be preached, as well as to men. I thought then as I now think, how useless is such lucid nonsense! Had he addressed women as having souls, he might have profited them, for they were conscious of this without his logical arguments to prove it. His attempts to prove the proposition would rather lead them to doubt the fact. Another preacher consumed two hours in a discourse to prove that all men were possessed of *free will*. No doubt each of his auditors was conscious of this truth before he began his proof. Had the preacher addressed them as having a free will, he might have profitted them. So my son has delivered a popular discourse to prove that men have capacities to believe the witness of God. Now, men are as conscious that they can believe from good testimony, as that they are possessed of a free will; and women, that they have souls. Why attempt

to prove them? We should address men in the truth of God as capable of believing the gospel we preach, without turning aside from the way to prove a truism, that men are capable of believing it. The apostles did not preach thus. They simply presented the testimony to the truth they delivered, and urged the acceptance of it immediately upon all who heard it. The folly of denying that men can believe the testimony of God, may be a reasonable excuse to those who attempt to prove it now.

What has led men to deny that sinners can believe, is the doctrine that they are so totally depraved, and consequently so helpless, that they cannot act or move in obedience to God, more than a mill wheel can move till acted upon by extraneous power. They have labored to establish the doctrine that the Holy Spirit must first move upon the sinner, regenerate, or make him a new creature; and that till then he cannot believe, repent, convert or turn to God. This is believed to be the foundation of Calvinism—of sovereign grace—of unconditional election,—partial redemption, &c &c.

Y. P. And do you believe, that mankind can repent convert, or turn to the Lord independent of the Holy Spirit? I have always viewed these as the works of the Spirit. Do instruct me on these points, if you please.

O. P. Yes, my son, they are the works of the Spirit, in the same sense that faith is his work. The Spirit speaks in his word, and gives in it the testimony that it is true. We receive the testimony—or we believe, thus, "God gives or offers faith to all men, in that he has raised his Son from the dead." The Spirit has in the word, revealed the depraved, lost and dangerous state of the world, exposed to wrath and everlasting death. He believes and is alarmed; and in distress cries out what shall I do to be saved? Now it is plain that he would not be thus alarmed, and would not thus inquire, if he did not believe himself a sinner, and exposed to hell. What shall I do? He is not divinely told to do nothing; but is instructed to repent and be converted, and to be baptized that his sins may be blotted out. Repentance is not barely distress on account of sin and danger; this he has already as the convicted pentecostian Jews had; he must also reform, convert or turn from sin, and turn to God with all his heart and be baptized; and then he shall receive the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of Holy Ghost. He must cease to do evil and learn to do well. All men, every where are com-

manded to repent. Why? Because God "has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness"—and "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Here is presented one motive to engage the sinner to reform. Another motive is, that if he reforms and turns to God, "he shall receive the forgiveness of his sins, and refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord," or the Holy Spirit. "Turn ye at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." Prov. 1. Till they convert or turn to the Lord, there is no promise of forgiveness—no promise of the Spirit, nor of refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord—no promise that Jesus will be sent again to them for salvation in the last day. When sinners believe these things, with all the kind invitations, and assurances of acceptance given by the Spirit in his word, he reforms, he converts, and turns to the Lord with all his heart, determined to spend his days in the Lord's service. The doctrine that sinners can and should repent, reform, convert or turn, was never once objected to by sinners in the days of Christ and his apostles, as things that they could not perform. Nor would they have been reckoned impossible for sinners to perform, but for the system above mentioned. Jesus once upbraided certain cities, highly favored, because they repented not, if this was a work beyond their power, he would not have thus upbraided them. He further said, If the Sodomites had have had the same privileges as those cities had, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Their great depravity would not have prevented their repentance. If man cannot repent and turn to the Lord, would they have been commanded to do it, on pain of damnation? None can repent for, or in the room of the sinner, he himself must repent or perish—he must turn or die without the Spirit—without hope.

Y. P. How shall we understand Acts xi, 18. "Then hath the Lord granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles?"

O. P. In the same way as he gave faith to all nations—seeing he gave evidence (the means to believe) to all nations, by raising Jesus from the dead. So he gave the means of repentance to the Gentiles, the gospel of salvation and life, by which believed, they were led to repentance.

Y. P. I have been taught that repentance is a change of heart; that none but a new creature can possess it—none but those who have received the Holy Spirit.

C. P. That repentance is a change of heart, or of mind

or purpose I readily grant—a great and visible change. That it is effected by the Spirit through faith in the word, I also believe.—But that it is only to be found in the new creature—and in those who have received the Holy Spirit, I cannot admit; because by faith, repentance, conversion and baptism, we are brought into Christ Jesus, and receive his Spirit. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature—none out of him are such.—Such have received the unction, the anointing, the eye salve—or spirit of wisdom and of revelation, whereby they know all things. I might enlarge here but you have the Bible, and can examine for yourself this subject at leisure. One thing I wish you to examine carefully; that the promise is one thing, and the thing promised is another. "He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Here are both the promise, and the thing promised. I have no idea of any new revelation given. But by the reception of the Spirit, the scriptures are experimentally known in their power and glory, and the person renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him. They are no longer led by the flesh but by the Spirit—they follow not after the flesh, but after the Spirit—they are justified and saved from sin, are new creatures, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.

I advise my son to preach this doctrine in the language of revelation. Too much speculation has been written and spoken on this subject; such speculation however plausible, is of real injury. The minds of many have been entangled by it, and brought into distress and death. Preach the word with all humility of mind, yet with the boldness of a firm believer.

B. W. S.

For the Messenger.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Luke xvi, 19–31.

It has been left undetermined by Theologians, whether the above scripture ought to be considered as a *parable* or a history of facts, which actually did occur; it however matters not, in which light it may be viewed; the only difference is this, if it is a parable, it is what *may* happen; for the Savior never made improbabilities the subjects of his parables; and if

it be a history, it is what *has* happened. Viewing it then either as a parable or history, it is equally interesting and instructive. After a careful perusal, several important lessons may be deduced from it, some of which we will here present.

1st. It aims a fatal blow at the doctrine prevalent among the Jews, and especially among the Sadducees, viz: that "prosperity was an evidence that man enjoyed the Divine approbation, and *vice versa*." They conceived that poverty and misfortune, were direct punishments of sin, and that if they attempted to relieve those who were suffering, it mattered not to what extent, they would thwart the design of God, and incur his displeasure; and hence their cold hard heartedness, and entire neglect of the poor and needy. But the Savior in the parable shows the utter fallacy of thus judging from appearances; and teaches that a man may amass immense riches, clothe himself with all the magnificence of an Eastern Prince, in purple and costly linen, and feast upon all the delicious viands afforded by the gardens of Palestine; and yet remain under the displeasure and condemnation of God, and finally loose his own soul. Oh! let us beware that we are not lulled into forgetfulness, and the neglect of our duties, by prosperity and the empty smiles of a carnal world, and thus bring with redoubled force the judgments of God upon our heads.

2nd. This parable teaches us, that without an entire submission of ourselves, soul, body and spirit to God; notwithstanding we may deal honestly and justly with our fellowmen; and notwithstanding we may not have committed any violent aggravating crime, we cannot be saved; that morality alone is not a sufficient recommendation for a seat in the skies. Let us consider the case in point for a moment. This rich man is not charged by the Savior with any gross immorality, any outbreaking conduct: it is not said of him that he made an improper use of his wealth; or that he was uncharitable or penurious, or that he was overbearing and tyrannical in exercising the power his riches gave him; it is not intimated that he indulged in excess or gluttony in eating or drinking, there is nothing of this kind even hinted at; all that is said of him, is, that he was *rich*, he was *clothed well* and *fared sumptuously*. Doubtless, if his life were strictly scrutinized, and compared with the lives of modern moralists, and even many *professing christians*, it would show off to advantage.—In what then did his sin consist?

The only rational inference we can draw from all the circumstances is, that in the enjoyment of the pleasures and goods of this life which were so profusely scattered along his path, he neglected to remember and be grateful to him who bestowed them. In this, did his guilt consist. And what was the punishment, such neglect merited? The unfortunate man is consigned to the regions of the damned, and everlasting separation from God and all holy beings. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." And while suffering all the agony of a being under the condemnation of a just God, that agony is increased by the sad reflection, that all the joys of heaven he has *lost*, and all the torments of hell he has *gained* in consequence of *his own* neglect of duty! When those who make this world their god and devote themselves solely to its enjoyments and pleasures, to the neglect of more important matters, die, they leave behind them the God they worshiped, the heaven they enjoyed, and go to the regions of endless wo, to learn the wisdom they might have gleaned from Moses, and the Prophets!

But while this parable contains an awful warning to the wicked, it also administers a word of sweet consolation to the desponding Saint. It teaches us that our poverty, our afflictions, our distresses, will not render us odious in the sight of our Heavenly Father—that "neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor indeed any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God"—that although in this life we may "receive evil things" yet if we live righteously until death, in heaven we shall be "comforted." Fellow-christian! then take courage; are you persecuted for righteousness sake? rejoice that you are counted worthy. Are you afflicted? Endure your afflictions patiently, ever keeping in mind that "though our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

3d. In the third and last place, this parable teaches us that God has done all that can be done consistently with his divine government, for the salvation of the world. The evidence which he has already given to sustain christianity and to convince the unbeliever, is so strong, that were some supernatural influence exerted, were one to *rise* from the *dead* and bear testimony, the conviction *could* not be greater! The moral means which God designed to employ in man's redemption have been exhausted; and if these fail our case is truly a desperate one. But we are assured by divine testimo-

ny that if the means provided are *used*, there is a sufficiency. David tells us that the "Law of the Lord is perfect," and Paul affirms "that the scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation" and not only so, but after the man is saved, they are able "to perfect him, and furnish him thoroughly unto every good work," and Abraham said, "they have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them."

From these facts, and these scriptures, it is then very evident that in order to obtain salvation, and escape everlasting misery, we must receive the scriptures of eternal truth, and live in obedience to all their divine commands.

Thoughtless; careless sinner, pause for one moment and reflect—call to mind your situation! think of the goodness of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin! and forsake the evil of your ways, "turn to the Lord, who will have mercy upon you, and to our God who will abundantly pardon."

CLEMENT.

WANTS OF THE CHURCHES,—No. 3.

In our last volume, we wrote a few articles on the wants of the churches, and as a worthy and talented corespondent of another communion favored our readers with a few articles on the same subject and promised to continue them, we have been purposely silent and prepared no essays with direct reference to this subject. We do not wish, however, to abandon our original design, & shall therefore renew the subject, and from time to time keep it before the view of the public. Some may conclude that we are rather censorious, but we cannot well imagine how any great good can be effected unless we speak out in plain terms. If for doing this any should be disposed to charge us with censoriousness all we can say is, that we plead not guilty, and until we can see and feel ourselves guilty we shall pursue the even tenor of our way regardless of praise or blame from any.

We are well satisfied that this age is peculiarly and strongly marked by selfishness: The church is selfish—

narrow and contracted in its operations in a comparative point of view. We want an expansive benevolence, like that of Jesus Christ, the head of the church. The selfish and parsimonious spirit of this age must be hurled headlong out of the church. Unless this be done we shall retrograde with all our boasted knowledge of reform. The world is rushing in crowds down the steep of time into perdition. They need instruction—they need the word of life. But who is to publish it to them? If done, the church must do it. How can the church do it? They must send out men—*competent* men, who can present the way, the truth and the life to them. The church must support—must sustain these men.

It is true that there are many who profess to be governed by the Bible who are unwilling to hire and support preachers. We *hire* men to teach our children and pay them for it; but those who object to paying for teaching men and women how to act that they may enter into heaven, never dream of asking the services of a school master *free*.

Few, I presume, will accuse me of censoriousness when I give it as my firm conviction that this very important duty is not observed by the churches as it should be. This is a subject that will suit the latitude and longitude of almost every congregation of professed christians on the globe. Hitherto, we have assumed a false modesty on this subject. We have not spoken out as plainly as we should, and in many instances the just war that has been waged against a hireling priesthood—a sectarian clergy, has poisoned the minds of thousands and dried up the small rivulets of their benevolence. I might make another remark that I think will be duly appreciated when reflected upon; that it is dangerous to popularity to speak plainly on this subject, either as writers or preachers. We shall probably incur the dis-

pleasure of many and be chargable with selfishness ourselves. I know this view of the subject has kept in silence—still keeps in silence many a noble spirit who is often in suffering circumstances.

Brethren, upon you individually and congregationally depends the salvation of hundreds and thousands who are bound for eternity—bound for the judgment seat of Christ. Can you, are you willing to see sinners rushing on to ruin, when it is in your power to bless them with the light of life?

Are you willing to see the infant congregations wasting down for the want of proper religious instruction? Many there are throughout our States, lately built up, and are now left by the Evangelist a prey for the world, the flesh and the Devil. It is impossible for the same Evangelist to return and teach them as they should be taught. The territory over which he is to travel is too extensive. How many young men there are who, if educated and prepared for public life, would swell the ranks of our teaching brethren and prove a blessing to the church and to the world.

The present crisis calls loudly upon every christian to begin the work in good earnest. Be not frightened at the various apparitions hitherto supposed to exist, but like the freed men in Christ Jesus, exercise that liberty by using the means placed in your possession to the glory of the Lord.

The fact is we must have preachers. Sinners cannot be converted without them. Faith, you know, comes by hearing the word of God. Some one, therefore, must preach it, and although the testimony is in the word of God, yet that testimony must be properly presented.

We have experimented long enough, I think, to satisfy the most skeptical, that the church will never prosper either in its own spiritual growth, or increase in numbers without public teachers. Think of it, dear brother, as you read, and ask yourself what influence brought you to confess the name of Jesus, and caused you to submit to his government. Was it not by the influence of a teacher of the christian religion? By a strict analysis of our own experience on this subject, we shall be the better prepared to feel the force of the above remarks.

I repeat it, we must do more than we have ever done. The times call for it. We must "deny ourselves" of many luxuries, many comforts, and like Jesus Christ, our great example, cease not in our efforts, till death shall cut the cords of life. This subject shall claim much of our attention during the current year, should life and health permit. We are happy to announce to our distant readers, that the essays of our talented, zealous and indefatigable brother Creath, of Mo., on the "claims of Evangelists," published in the last volume, have done much good. The signs are brightening in our own country, and many of the churches in good earnest are coming up to the work. The Lord bless them, and inspire us all with hearts full of pure benevolence to do more than we have ever done in the Lord's vineyard. Amen.

D. P. H.

PALMYRA, Mo., May 2nd, 1844.

TO THE READERS OF THE MESSENGER.

FATHER STONE:—Your readers in Missouri are well pleased with the ability and spirit with which the Christian Messenger is conducted. All our preaching and writings ought to issue in the practice and spirit of christianity. How many of the readers of the Messenger read the Bible through once every year prayerfully, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation? This is a commendable practice. It is said that John Urich, a pious German, used to devote eight hours every day to reading his Bible upon his knees,

and in prayer—eight hours in labor for a support, and eight hours to sleep and recreation. The learned Grotius said, when about to die, that he would give all his learned lumber for the piety of John Urich. Reader, go and act similarly and you will die joyfully.

Are the fathers and heads of families as constant and as regular in reading the scriptures, instructing their families, singing and prayer, as the sun is in rising and setting? What an unspeakable blessing to be raised in the nurture and admoninion of the Lord! Ephesians, vi. 4, literally nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The mind needs to be nourished with wholesome discipline and instruction, as the body with proper food. *Paideia*, *discipline* refers to all that knowledge which it is proper for children to receive, including elementary principles of behaviour, morality, honesty, speaking truth, industry, self-government, self-denial, and submission to parental authority. Now the said instructions may refer to whatever is necessary to form the mind, to touch, regulate and purify the passions; and includes the whole of religion.

How powerful are the effects of a religious education when enforced by pious examples! what a curse to be raised in a family where there is no prayer, no reading of the scriptures, nodevotion no love of God. Let christian parents frequently read the sixth and eleventh chapters of Deuteronomy. "And these words which I commend thee this day shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house and on thy gates." Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8, 9. How good are these sayings, and how little regarded! why have we so few christians in these latter days? Because so few are raised for God. Why have we so few men and women eminent for piety? Because we train them to be *smart*, to get rich, to be ambitious, resentful, high-minded, rather than pious, good, humble, meek, self-denied, and then we wonder that they are such beings as we have taught them to be.

Christian fathers! readers of the Messenger, how many of you are trying to shape your sons after the examples in the Old and New Testaments, as Abraham, Jacob, Moses,

ny that Samuel, Elijah, Daniel, John, Paul, and Timothy, instead of shaping them after the Roman and Grecian warrior, cut-throats, and our own politicians and warriors. Are we raising our children for God or the world? Christian mothers, how many of you are raising your daughters after the example of Sarah, Rebecca, Hannah, Huldah Miriam, Mary, Lois and others? Are they reading the Bible or novels? Do you desire them to shine in ball-rooms or in the church of God? Have you to send them to a dancing school to learn manners? or have you not better manners at home and in the church of God than they have in the ball-room? What a reproach to christians! that they have no manners at home, but must learn them from the world; learn our sons and daughters at ten years old to repeat the New Testament by heart! Have we done like Hannah did to Samuel, dedicate them to the service of Jesus Christ? Are we raising them for him and his church? Brethren, one and all, let us turn our attention to this great subject. Then our sons will be as plants grown up in their youth—our daughters will be corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace. May there be a generation to serve God, as long as the sun and moon endure in heaven!

J. CREATH.

BROTHER STONE:—I should like to hear your opinion of the practice which is becoming so prevalent among our brethren, of pamphletering each other when a difficulty occurs. Have we any precept or example in scripture to warrant us in publishing the reports of rumor, that many tongued monster, against any brother who may be so unfortunate as to fall under our suspicion or displeasure? My motive for making the inquiry is, that it may be condemned, if worthy of condemnation.

Yours, in affection,

H. T. N. BENEDICT.

REPLY:—Rumor is a mischievous thing, especially where character is involved. When once started, it is almost impossible to stop it—it increases in its progress Many innocent persons have been greatly injured, if not ruined by it. The scriptures certainly condemn this conduct. A good

man "backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." Ps. xv. "Speak evil of no man," is a binding precept upon all. To write evil against another, is the same thing in a different form.

How carefully should we guard against taking up a reproach against a brother—against any man! It will do us no good, nor any body else; but it will wound our own conscience, and cause others to stumble; and, worse than all, it may ruin the innocent person in time and eternity. There may be cases where it would be right to give information of a man, known to be a bad and dangerous person. Should an impostor in the East, under the cloak of religion, sow discord and make division among the churches, contrary to the gospel—should such impostor be travelling to the West, with the same design, the christian community should be apprised of the person and his intention, that they might be guarded against him. But even in such cases there should be great care lest we might err. B. W. S.

UNFAITHFULNESS.

A certain nobleman about to go into a far country to receive a kingdom to himself, called his servants and delivered unto them his money and his goods, and distributed them to every one according to his several ability. This was a wise arrangement; for had he delivered ten talents to a person of ability only to manage one, the poor weak servant must have been distracted with care, and have been unable to manage it with profit to the nobleman. The Prince gave commandment to every one to occupy and improve what had been delivered them, till he should return. Then he would reckon with them, and give them rewards according to their industry and faithfulness.

When he commenced his journey and was gone, the majority of these servants resolved to claim and possess the nobleman's goods and money as their own, and refused that he

should reign over them. They therefore sent an embassy to the authority from which he went to receive the kingdom, (the Cesars no doubt, by whom kingdoms and crowns were given, as they pleased) affirming that they would not have this man to rule over them, and protesting against it in earnest language. After a long time, the nobleman, having received the kingdom, returned, and then sat in judgment upon the conduct of his rebellious, wicked servants; those who protested against his ruling over them were slain before him, and cast into outer darkness where there is weeping wailing and gnashing of teeth, and the few faithful ones were rewarded with glory, and honor.

This nobleman is the Lord Jesus, the Son of God. His going into a far country, was his entering into the holiest of all, into heaven itself after his death and resurrection. The purpose of his going there was that he might receive a kingdom for himself. This kingdom he had not authoritatively received, till he arose from the dead. Then he could say, and did say. "All authority, is given me in heaven and on earth." He has received authority to reign, but he has never yet returned to receive the kingdom to himself—he is yet setting at the right hand of the Father, and will continue there till all his enemies shall be made his footstool—death, the powers of darkness, the man of sin, and every other enmy shall be destroyed. Then will he receive the everlasting kingdom, composed of his saints, and reign without end, forever and ever.

From his ascension to heaven until his return, is the time of probation, and of improvement for eternity. Now is the accepted time and now is the day of salvation—now is the time allowed to occupy and improve the Lord's goods, and secure an everlasting reward. When he shall come time will cease and all opportunities of improvement will be cut off forever. Those to whom the goods were committed were servants, they belonged to their Lord, both soul and body, and were bound to serve him. So all the world of mankind belong to the Lord. They, "the heathen and uttermost parts of the earth are given to him for an inheritance and possession," and are bound to obey him. "He died for all that they that live, should not henceforth live to themselves but unto him that died for them and rose again."

The goods committed to the servants were all the Lord's. He is heir of all things,—the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.—These goods are the money, lands, houses

and property in our hands, with which earthly substance we are bound, every one to honor and glorify God, according to our several abilities. Do we possess much? Much will be required. Do we possess little? Little will be required. Every one, whether he have much or little is required to improve it—every one has something to do.

The servants wish to claim and many have claimed these goods as their own, and have ejected the Lord from his right, and denied his authority to reign over them. Claiming these goods as their own, they appropriate them to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and to the pride of life, and not to the purposes which their Lord designed. They are wasting their Lord's goods; for which an account must shortly be rendered.

Glance your eyes upon one page of the Lord's book of rememberance, and tremble.

A.——B.——	Dr.	
put into his hands, money and goods		
to the value of	$10,000	
With part he built a house for self,	4,000	
Furniture, carpeting, Piano &c.	1,000	
A tract of land,	1,000	
A carrriage and horses,	1,000	
Laid up to buy lands for children.	3,000	
I gave an order to a needy man for		$10 It was protested
I gave do for the Bible society,		$20 It was protested
I gave do for a poor Evangelist		$20 It was protested
I gave do for building a plain chapel		$40 It was protested.
I gave do &c. &c.		

Awful account! O let us think in time how we can answer in the day of judgment to these things. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Yet there are a few who shall hear, "Well done good and faithful servants, enter into the joys of your Lord."

How many of the race of mankind reject the Lord's reign, his government and laws. Their duty is to receive him and submit to his commands; but they make light of it. How many who profess to be his servants, and have professed subjection to his laws, are comformed to the world—in its spirit and practice! They are seeking the friendship of the world, and to obtain it, they must of course imitate them!—they follow the customs of the world, more closely

than the laws of their king.—If they pray a little, and attend upon the public worship of God—if they earnestly contend for *their* faith, delivered them by their fathers, and leaders—if they attend to the ordinances of the house of God, baptism and the Lord's supper—if they do these things, they think they do enough. Yet they do not consider that by them the unevalgelized world are to be enlightened and saved—from them the word of the Lord is to go forth to the ends of the earth. This requires the Lord's goods in your hands, and woe to us, if we withhold them. Thousands—millions are dying for the lack of knowledge—the knowledge which must flow from Zion.

Here are we wrangling with untempered, and unchristian zeal for opinions, and in the fogs of sectarianism, and debate, truth is obscured, christian union broken, hell triumphing, and the world dying without God and hope. Christians awake from your deep and long slumbers. Read prayerfully the scriptures, learn your duty and do it. B. W. S.

SELFISHNESS.

"Self must be humbled, pride abased,
Else they destroy our souls."

WATTS.

Selfishness has always been the predominan t evil of the world, but it is thought, in no preceding age had it risen so high as in the present. This may well be called the age of selfishness. In every class, in every department, in the policy of nations, and in the religion of christendom, it is seen by its scowling aspects. With religion we are chiefly concearned, and shall confine ourselves to this subject in our following remarks.

Selfishness first introduced misery and death into the world. To please self rather than God, our first parents stretched forth their hand, and took of the forbidden fruit; ever since, the whole world have been led by the same principle to please self rather than their God; for they walk after the flesh, and not after the spirit—the lusts of the flesh—the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life are the motives by which they are actuated in their conduct while in the flesh, and therefore they cannot please God. Christianity is designed to correct and counteract and destroy this principle;

and in whatever heart it prevails, this principle is destroyed in a greater or less degree, so that christians walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. The flesh, with its affections and lusts are crucified; but crucifiction is a slow, lingering death—very slow in the present age.

Selfishness appears in individuals, and in a collected body of individuals, in a church or congregation.—1st. individuals; a commercial contract is about to be made; the seller wishes to get more for the property he sells, than he thinks it worth, or willing to give were he the buyer. The buyer wishes to purchase it at a less price than he thinks it worth, and less than he would be willing to take, were he seller. In each selfishness is equally apparent; each would be pleased to get the advantage, rather than please God, who requires that we "defraud not one another"—and as you would that men should do to you, so do ye even to them."—A person may have made and published an erroneous word or doctrine. He is challenged respecting it; rather than acknowledge the error, he prevaricates from the truth; for he thinks, to acknowledge would be injurious to self, though it would be pleasing to God, who commands us to confess our faults one to another. Selfishness appears in a thousand forms.

2. Selfishness is also seen in a church. A large congregation is able to employ, and does employ a talented preacher all his time. The preacher is entirely dependent on the congregation for the support of himself and family. There are many needy, small congregations around, who cannot get preaching. They apply to the congregation, who has a preacher, to help them. They refuse, though they have many praying members, and good exhorters, who could conduct their meetings to profit without their preacher. This is selfishness. The able Church should say to their pastor, we love you and your services; but other churches and places require them also. We wish not to be selfish.—Go, brother to them, and administer to them also the word of life; take nothing from them for your services—you and your family shall be our care. Tell them that you are supplied at home—that they give to other Evangelists who are needy what they designed to give you. Noble sacrifice! God will bless such a church in time and eternity. O that all would thus act—that all might be partakers of the benefit.

Churches manifest their selfishness in not sending the gospel to the Pagan nations, and to other places destitute of the

word and ordinances of the Lord. It becomes them to break the fetters of selfishness, and let their benevolence and beneficence abound to the blinded nations, and destitute provinces. This would be a happy means of turning our attention from wrangling, and disputations at home, and would concentrate and fix our minds on the good work of salvation and religion at home and abroad. We are so constituted that we must be doing something; and often it happens, that when we are not engaged doing good, we engage in doing mischief. To send the gospel abroad requires great sacrifices; but such are demanded by our Lord, and must be done,—if willingly done, a great and sure reward is promised—if unwillingly, it must be done. Brethren, think of these things—think seriously—think speedily, and act as well as think. Let us with one heart and soul co-operate on this important matter, and never be discouraged, nor faint. Let us all be of the same mind, and great good will follow.

B. W. S.

An Extract from the "Christian Review."

PURE SPEECH.

"Men become wedded to names, and a set of phrases, which they hold as dear as life. And what is most astonishing, many of these "orthodox" words convey no distinct idea to those, who most love them. "Orthodxy," "trinity," "total depravity," abstract influences, convey no distinct idea to the world, and they are not received with the same acceptation by any two parties in christendom.

My object in this short essay is, not to wage war with parties, but to forwarn my brethren of the rocks and shoals, which, I fear, are before us. We have so far avoided party names, and this our honest enemies will not dispute; but there are several words in use amongst us, which are unauthorized by divine sanction, and which may, at some future day, be productive of mischief. For instance, the term proclaimer of the gospel, is neither scriptural nor classical, and when we find better words in the Bible to express our ideas, I can see no use is adopting it. As another instance of the language of Ashdod, I must be permitted to mention the very common sayings, "The Reformation," and this "reformation," which we so often see in print, and hear from the preachers."

T. F.

REMARK:—With these observations we are pleased, and heartily concur. The preachers of the different parties may be generally known by their phraseology, which evidently proves that they get it not from the Bible; for if they all spoke according to that book, they would speak the same things in the same language as that dictated by the spirit. We confess that we ourselves have been guilty in using the word *Reformation, current reformation*, in accordance with common usage amongst us, and not with that of the Bible. We promise to reform in future. It is a very general remark of those inimical to us as a people, and indeed of all, that they can know us, not only from our writing and preaching, but from our common conversation, by the frequent use of the words, *proclaimers, reformers, disciples*, &c.

Our brother Fanning, in the article above says, "We have so far avoided party names, and this our honest enemies will not dispute." We should be glad to believe this to be a fact; but are forbidden by what appears amongst us. By what name God's family on earth shall be called is yet unsettled, undetermined amongst us. Some contend that we should be called *disciples* as our family name; hence, they say, the disciples meeting—the disciples meeting house, &c., &c. Others contend for the name *christian* as that by which the whole family in heaven and earth should be called. We confess our decided preference of the latter name, because it was given by divine authority as that name by which the disciples of Christ should be called. Now, if bro. Fanning thinks as we do on this point, we have set him an example for his imitation; for we have acknowledged our error with respect to the use of the word *reformation*, against which he demurs; let him as candidly acknowledge his error in the use of the word *disciple*, and reform in future. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." The Bile, the Bible should be our religion. B. W. S.

A FRIENDLY REMARK ON MATTATHES.

I have lately read an essay over the signature of Mattathes in the Millennial Harbinger April 1844, on mysteries in religion. We are pleased with many of his observations. One thing is not so satisfactory. He asks the question,

"Why should we reject any thing in God's revelation, because we cannot comprehend it? His unity of nature, his plurality of person, the conception and incarnation of the son, and the vicarious sufferings of Christ—the prescience of God, and the free agency of his creatures,—the communication of his Spirit, and his indwelling presence with disciples,—the mortality of man, yet the resurection of the body—are not these all mysteries—doctrines glorious and sublime, yet utterly incomprehensible, and above reason. But who would reject them, because he cannot fathom them? To do so, were to discard the fundamental truths of our religion, and put away from us, as unreasonable, our very hope of salvation. Yet there are persons who reluctantly admit these clearly revealed truths," &c.

1. "Why should we reject any tthing in God's revelation, because we cannot comprehend it?"—Ah, truly, why should we? No honest man, no christian can, or will do it. Our brother mentions several of those revealed incomprehensibilities, as God's "unity of nature and plurality of person," This is acknowledged a mystery, an incomprehensible mystery—but is it revealed—*clearly revealed* in the scriptures? Do the scriptures any where speak of a plurality of *person?* If it does, it is very far fetched inference, or from spurious writings.

2. But our brother makes his doctrine a *fundamental truth—our very hope of salvrtion.* If he views it of such importance, surely pity for the ignorant and erring would prompt him to direct where in the Bible it is taught. If shown to be there so clearly revealed, my reason shall prostrate itself before the truth of God, and humbly receive her revelation, however incomprehensible; and so will every honest man. Till then I must view it as the dialect of Ashdod, and not the "pure speech" of heaven.

3. Another thing plainly revealed, says our brother, is, the vicarious sufferings of Christ—this too, according to bro. Mattathes, is among the fundamental truths—our very hope of salvation. What does our brother mean by the vicarious sufferings of Christ? Is it that he as our substitute or surety paid our debt of suffering in our stead, and thus satisfied the demands of law and justice against us, and that by this satisfaction by his blood we are justified? This is the theological definition of the terms. Does he dissent from this definition? and has he adopted another? If the doctrine be of such immense importance, and the very hope of our sal-

vation, he surely will tell us what it is, and where in the Bible to be found. We know the Bible teaches that Christ suffered for us. the just for the unjust to bring us to God.—But vicarious suffering is not the dialect of the Bible; and it has been made to mean what the Bible does not teach.

4. Our bro. Mattathes puts other doctrines incomprehensible with the two we have just glanced at, as the doctrine of the conception and incarnation of the Son of God—the prescience of God, yet the free agency of his creatures—the communication and indwelling of the spirit with his disciples—the mortality and resurection of the body.—But, are not all these incomprehensible doctrines plainly revealed in the Bible? Yes, and therefore we have no hesitancy to receive them. Were the former doctrines as plainly revealed, we should be equally happy to receive them also.

It is hard to give up old cherished and popular opinions, and embrace truth without reserve when presented. How important that the language of the Bible be used in expressing articles of faith! As soon as we depart from this, we err; and error is certain to beget uncharitableness and strife, which are the precursors of disunion and devision. It becomes us to be humble, and to bear one anothers weakness; not to be too positive in affirming what many as honest, as learned and as good as ourselves, may not have discovered nor received as truth. We should examine every doctrine by the Bible with humility and candor, and prayer, before we receive it. Let not great names, popularity nor worldly interest influence our mind to receive or reject. If God has revealed it, receive it—if not, reject it, irrespective of consequences. God loves an honest man, who labors to please him in all things. Why should we substitute opinion for the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ? Will not evil be the consequence? Let us cleave to the Bible.

We know that certain opinions of these two doctrines named above, are by orthodox; made tests of truth, or of christianity; and the denial of these opinions incurs certain condemnation, and exclusion from the church on earth, and from heaven itself. Yet strange, they cannot agree among themselves on those opinions! We are in danger as people, lest by wishing their favor, and desirous of casting off the odium they have against us, we should be led to deny the first principles of our faith; among which is, that opinions should not be made tests of chrtstian fellowship. Reject this, a written confession is indispensible; and a new party

is formed to swell the number already in the world. It is a trite but a true saying, that it is easir to assert than to prove.

B. W. S.

ANSWER TO ELDER WM. H. HOWARD'S QUERIES.

2 Pet. i. 11. "Is this the kingdom of Christ on earth, or triumphant in heaven?"

ANSWER:—The verse reads thus: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savor Jesus Christ."

The kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, the everlasting kingdom, frequently occur in the scriptures, and very frequently mean the same thing; yet there are shades of difference discoverable in them, hard to be determined in every case. I have resolved it into the church on earth, and the church in heaven. That on earth is in its incipitent and prepartory state; that in heaven is completed. On earth it is imperfect, containing the wheat and the tares—a net cast into the sea and gathereth of every kind, in the end of the world the angels shall come, and sever the wicked from the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. Then in heaven the chnrch shall be perfect—"in no wise shall enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whosoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life."—The church here is continually changing its members, one generation falling into the grave and another succeeding; but then there will be no more death; the kingdom will be everlasting. The church on earth receives into its bosom those who tabernacle in flesh and blood; but flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God in heaven.

IMPROVEMENT.

We issued this number on new and smaller type. We have greatly improved our style, and hope, that our friends may not only see that we are determined in external appearance to present the Messenger neat and well executed, but we intend the Lord willing to fill its pages with such facts and documents as will be of service to our brethren. We asked for a more liberal patronage, and for our dues from de-

linquents. The Brethren have responded promptly and sent us hundreds of new subscribers. We wish if possible to issue an extra this year; but this will depend upon the patronage we receive. There are many who can afford one or more political journals, and yet have no religious paper about them. These same brethren are often heard to complain of hard times—money is scarce and they are not able to take a religious paper. To such we would remark, (should they read this) subscribe and pay for a religious journal. If the Messenger is not preferred by you, send on to some other Bro. and take his paper. Let all the religious light you can get shine into your minds and hearts. EDITORS.

ILLINOIS STATE MEETING OF CHRISTIANS, FOR 1844.

This meeting is appointed to commence on Friday, before the 3rd Lord's day of September next, in Winchester Scott County, Illinois. This beautiful and pleasant county seat is situated 16 miles west of Jacksonville.

There is a church of Christ in this village, numbering nearly 300.

The brethren are urged to meet, and come prepared from their various localities, to communicate the situation and condition of the churches.—Brethren from other States are invited to attend.

RELIGIOUS NEWS.

JACKSON, MISS., March 22, 1844.

MY DEAR OLD BROTHER, B. W. STONE:—I am greatly pleased with the Christian Messenger in its late dress, and so are the brethren who are subscribers at this place. It was always a favorite with me, but I think you have improved on its former excellencies. The reformation which you plead, is the reformation, of which a perishing world stands most in need. It is a lamentable truth that, most of the professors of the christian religion, understand much better than they perform. Charity cannot prevent me from entertaining the fear that many in our so called reformation, are resting under the impression that they have attained to a high degree of excellence in the christian profession, because they understand its theory better than the sects do, while they forget that christianity was never designed to be a system of mere metaphysical investigation, or philosophical speculation, about which men should spend their time in debate, contention and strife; but a pure heavenly system of truth, unveiling to us the character of God—the otherwise inscrutable mysteries of the universe—our duties and relations to God and to each other—the glorious scheme of redemption through the life, death and resurection of the son of God—immortality and eternal life, by the display of which our hearts should be renovated, our affections improved and our whole moral nature brought into willing captivity to the law of Christ

With respect to myself, I will inform you, that for the last two years I have been an incumbent of one of the departments of our State Government, viz: Auditor of Public Accounts. By this office I am enabled to maintain a very helpless and dependant family, which, owing to my bad health, I could not do by any phsyically, laborious employment. A portion of my time on Lord's days I employ in preaching to the convicts in our State Penitentiary, and in visiting our little churches a few miles in the country. Our little church in this city has obtained a lot of ground on which we intend building a convenient brick meeting house during the year. A number of the convicts in the penitentiary have become obedient to the faith. Six were immersed by brother L. B. Holloway, on the 2d Lords day of this month, and the prospect is flattering that others of these poor unfortunate beings will soon follow the example set by their believing associates.

It will be interesting to you, I presume, to hear from my old uncle, Joseph Matthews, in Texas. I visited him last December, and found him and my old aunt, in better health than I could have expected for persons of their age. Their son Mansel W. Matthews, whom, you recollect, is preacning, and the cause is prospering gloriously in that vicinity. The church there was founded about 18 months ago, and numbered in December about 150. Our whole family connections there, including two of my brothers and two sisters, and the numerous posterity of my uncle, that are old enough to understand the gospel, are professors of religion.

Your brother,
JAMES E. MATTHEWS.

ATHENS, Sangamon co., Ill.

BRO.'s STONE AND HENDERSON:—I take the present opportunity of conveying a few lines to you, to inform you of the result of my labors as Evangelist; since last Easter 145 persons have obeyed the Gospel. We have had many interesting and pleasant meetings, and have just closed, and on the Sangamon River 10 miles East of Springfield, where the *pure gospel* never has been much preachad until last winter and this spring. This was truly an interesting Meeting. Thirty made the good confession and were immersed, and two were added from the Baptists.

One circumstance took place which I shall particularly notice, as it was in a Methodist neighborhood, we had one of their preachers there on Lords day, in the evening, he aimed a mighty blow at the truth, hopeing to check its onward march. But the blow recoiled on his own head and that of his party; for on next day I had the pleasure of immersing five of his membefs in the name of the Lord Jesus; and we hope much good seed was sown which will bear fruit. Since the above, we have had an interesting meeting with bro. Powell on Sugar Creek, 6 miles South of Springfield, which resulted in 8 additions. The meeting is still in progress. Yours, in the blessed hope,

WALTER P. BOWLS.

Boone co. Mo., March 20, 1844.

Last Lords day I was in Fayette and had the pleasure to immerse one, who confessed the Lord Jesus. Bro. H. Thomas recently spent several days with us in Columbia, embracing the first Lords day of this month, when two confessed the Lord. Bro. Church was with him during the meeting. Bro. L. Hatchitt recently added 10 to the church at Mt. Pleasant in this county,—8 by confession and obedience and 2 from the Baptists.

Remember our State meeting commences on Friday before the 3rd Lords day in May next, Fayette, Hanover county Mo. Bro. Stone can't you attend? You have numerous friends who would like to see and hear you once more before you QUIT the shores of time. We hope that bro. Henderson will be with us, and all other brethren who can.

Affectionately your brother, T. M. ALLEN.

P. S. April 2nd.—I have just returned from Jefforson City with bro. S. S. Church. We had 8 additions—4 by letter—1 reclaimed and 3 by confession and baptism. Bro. H. Thomas and myself spent several days in Huntsville Embracing the 4th Lords day in March, when there were 5 additions, (I think.) T. M. A.

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EXTRACTS.

Moultrie County Ill., April 21, 1844.

Dear Bro. Stone:—I firmly believe that baptism, connected with faith, repentance, confession and calling on the name of the Lord, is God's ordained plan for remission of sins, and have so preached for more than ten years, and baptized many. But I am afraid that the great zeal manifested by some Editors of Periodicals and some preachers, in maintaining baptism for pardon of sins is rather an injury. Often they speak too lightly of what has been called christian experience, and treat almost every excitement as a delusion, and consequently too little stress has been laid on those passages of scripture, that show that God' children do receive his holy spirit, which will produce certain fruits in them, such as love, joy, &c. &c. This is a reality and not a delusion and is an evidence to the child of God that he has fellowship with the father and his son Jesus Christ. In Acts v. 32, the Apostle states that "we are witnesses of these things and so also is the Holy Ghost which God hath given them that obey him." *Query*. Is it not stated here that there are two classes of evidence given to the sons of God, of the facts and truth of christianity; first, the testimony of the Apostles oral or written; secondly, the Holy Spirit received by them that believe and obey from the heart the Lord Jesus Christ.

John says, "he that believeth on the son of God hath the witness in himself." Paul says, "the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God," Now, Brother Stone, I would like to hear from you on this important subject through the Messenger, or by private letter. This is the first time I have ever lifted my pen to write to any Editor on any religious subject; for I did not conceive myself competent to write for the press.

Query. If the Bishops or Elders decide in matters of discipline, who are to try the Elders for their misdemeanors?

May the Lord bless you. LEVI FLEMING.

☞ We have not room at present to give an answer to the above *in extenso*. The law of the Lord must settle all difficulties, and in *all* cases be applied to in matters of discipline. B. W. S.

Rising Sun, Van Buren co. Iowa, April 4, 1844.

The good cause of our Lord and Master is looking up. On last Lords day and Monday night there were 6 additions.

J. W. PICKET.

—

Quincy, Ill., April 17, 1844.

It seems to be the general impression that something good will be done in Quincy for the salvation of poor sinners not long hence. Father Stone, if in the providence of God, you can visit us again, we should be happy to see you. I pray God, he may yet spare you to prosecute the noble work in which you are engaged, for the Messenger is doing much good amongst us. Your brother,

R. TURNER.

☞ My brethren in Quincy are informed, that if life, health and strength permit, he will, *Deo volente see them this summer.*

B. W. S.

—

Van Buren Iowa.

Dear Bro.'s Stone and Henderson:—Practical religion is too much neglected. We should expect to see those, who profess faith and obedience to the gospel, and zealons advocates of the Bible, among whom, light and knowledge have made such progress. We should expect to see them more spiritual—their light to shine conspicuously—to be examples to the world—an honor to religion and ornaments to the church. But alas! in too many instances it is not the case. Go on, dear brethren, and contend for the reformation of the present degentrate professors of religion. Your brother,

JOHN McCREARY.

—

Mt. Sterling, Ill., May 10, 1844

Dear Brethren of the Messenger:—I thank the Lord for the success of the Gospel. Since last February in my travels, I have witnessed the surrender of 41 persons to the Saviour of sinners.

Your brother, DAVID HOBBS.

—

Macoupin Co., Ill., April 7, 1844.

Dear Brethren Stone and Henderson:—Bro. Henry had a meeting on the first Lords day of this month in Wagner's Prairie when I obeyed the Gospel. Many seem anxious for the salvation of their souls.

Your brother, JOHN M. BREEDEN.

—

Oshawa, West Canada, Nov. 22, 1843.

Dear Bro. Stone:—The cause for which we labor and toil and pray night and day, is on the advance in this fine and flourishing province. Our prospects are brightening constantly, while there is a steady increase of numbers, and, best of all, true devotion and holiness appear in every member. If we had a few more faithful laborers, we should do much better. Your brother in the Lord.

JOSEPH ASH, jun'r.

We thank our brother for this information. We hope it is but the beginning of such intelligence he now gives. Do brother, continue to send us all the religious news of your country. It will be very acceptable to us. B. W. S.

[For the Christian Messenger.]

OBITUARY.

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WALNUT GROVE, WOODFORD CO. Ill.

DEAR BROTHER STONE,—It becomes my duty, painful as it is to advise you of the death of my beloved companion RHODA TRAVIS. She died on the 8th day of March about 8 o'clock in the morning, of a pulmonary disease. She was taken sick in January, and bore all her sufferings with more than ordinary christian fortitude. She had been a member of the church of Christ about 34 years, and died at the age of 60, having devoted more than half her life to the service of God. She remained patient during her affliction, and to the very last moment was perfectly in her right mind. She exhorted all her friends to serve the Lord and bade us farewell, shouting praises of her glorious Savior and Redeemer.

DANIEL TRAVIS.

With this truly devoted hand-maid of the Lord I have been for many tedions years acquaintad, and can truly say she was among the excellent of the earth—a mother in Israel is fallen. B. W. S.

—

ALSO, died Aprrl 17th 1844, our much beloved brother Jonathan Wright, of Vermont Ill. We are happy to state that he was a zealous devoted christian, and triumphantly died in the blissful hope of immortality. He was in the 56th ycar of his life.

"Time is winging us away
To our eternal home,
Life is but a winter-day
A journey to the tomb."

B. W. S.

—

BOONE COUNTY, Mo. March 20, 1844.

BRO. SOTNE,—I have just returned from the burial of old sister Nancy Stone, wife of our beloved bro. William Stone, formerly of Madison co. Kentucky. She bore her suffering with christian fortitude and patience, manifesting entire resignation to the will of God, and closed her earthly career, strong in the faith of the gospel and the glorious hope of immortality. She was sensible of her approaching dissolution and spoke of it with the calmness and assurance of a saint. She died as she lived, *a christian.*

Your Brother. T. M. ALLEN.

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CO-OPERATION AND CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

Much is being written and spoken on the subject of co-operation, co-operation meetings, church order and church organization. I had fondly hoped ere this, that these subjects would have been better understood, and that christians would employ their time in carrying out the benevolent designs of that benevolent scheme heaven has given to save a ruined world. But my hopes are not realized. We are not observing the injunction of the apostles, "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God."—Peter. We have been speaking contrary to the word of God, and while we pursue that course, we may certainly calculate on disorder and confusion. It strikes my mind most clearly, that the apostles "kept back nothing that was profitable"—nothing that would "perfect the man of God and thoroughly furnish him unto every good work." While this cannot be denied by any, all must, on calm and sober reflection agree, that those topics which have gendered so much strife, are among the "untaught questions" against which heaven has placed a prohibition as strong as that given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Why write so much? Why talk so much about church organization, co-operation meetings, &c. &c? If it be in accordance with the will of God, (and no one will deny it) that two or more congregations select a good and useful Evangelist, and send him out to "preach the word"—to bear the